

Town of Tiverton



Economic Development Commission

343 Highland Road, Tiverton Rhode Island 02878

MEETING MINUTES

ORGANIZATION: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

DATE AND TIME: April 10, 2014 @ 6:00PM

LOCATION: TIVERTON TOWN HALL
343 HIGHLAND ROAD
TIVERTON, RI 02878

Vice Chairman Thomas Humphrey called the regular meeting of the Tiverton Economic Development Commission to order at 6:00 P.M. Other members present were: Susan Gill, Jonathan Cottrell and Leonard Schmidt. Chairman Scott Humphrey was absent. Jay Massa was present on behalf of the Newport County Chamber of Commerce. Kristin Silveira, President of the Tiverton Four Corner's Merchant Group and a founding member of the Executive Board of the new Tiverton Business Association was also present.

Item # 1 Approval of March, 2014 minutes.

Mr. Cottrell made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Schmidt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Ms. Gill, Mr. Cottrell, Mr. T. Humphrey and Mr. Schmidt voted in favor of the motion.

Item #2 Town meetings update:

Harbor Commission / Susan Gill: Ms. Gill stated that an interim Harbor Master had been appointed by the Town Council (effective in May). She noted that an online resource, Working Waterfronts Network, had been discussed. Ms. Gill stated that the former Harbor Master, David Vannier, had been appointed as a Harbor Commission member. Other discussion had occurred regarding the water quality reports received from URI, which indicated high bacteria levels in areas.

Planning Board / Len Schmidt: Mr. Schmidt stated a petition was heard to rezone two commercially used properties from residential (R-80) to commercial (VC / Village Commercial) at Tiverton Four Corners. He stated that the Planning Board had recommended approval of the amendment by the Town Council, conditional upon a moratorium on further zoning amendments in the area until the entire area can be addressed. A brief discussion ensued regarding Four Corners. The Town Council will hold a public hearing regarding the proposed amendment.

Mr. Schmidt stated that there was also a petition for a two lot subdivision within the Stafford Pond Watershed Protection Overlay District. He noted that there was an interesting discussion regarding the impacts of impervious surface within the watershed.

Recreation Commission / Susan Gill: Ms. Gill stated that the Commission was in the process of reorganizing, and that one new member had been appointed. She stated that preparation and hiring was going on for the summer program. The new gazebo for Bulgarmarsh Park would be delivered shortly. Ms. Gill stated that the Commission was also looking at changes to the field use policies.

Town Council / Len Schmidt: Mr. Schmidt did not attend.

Wastewater Management / Jon Cottrell: Mr. Cottrell stated that the Commission was waiting for legislative approval of the new wastewater district.

Zoning Board / Thomas Humphrey: Mr. T. Humphrey stated that two petitions were heard: one for an appeal of the Building Officials determination regarding the septic system for the Tiverton Yacht Club and one for a new three (3) family condominium on Hurst Lane. He noted that the Zoning Board also sat as the Planning Board of Appeals to hear the appeal of the Planning Board's denial of the Site Ready Master Plan.

Four Corners Merchant Group / Susan Gill: Ms. Gill noted that there were many events coming up, such as the 5K, Easter Egg Hunt, the Nestival (Mother's Day weekend) and the Garden & Herb Festival (Memorial Day weekend). Discussion ensued regarding the guest speaker at the Merchant's Group meeting, Ted Strickland. Mr. Strickland runs tours of Rhode Island (RI Experience) and will be stopping regularly at Four Corners.

Item #3 Web site management: Susan Gill / Len Schmidt

Ms. Gill and Mr. Schmidt stated that they were working on website content and administration. Mr. Schmidt distributed copies of draft text for the site. Discussion ensued on methods to synopsise the text or create links through the website to provide a summary on the home page and more information on another page. Mr. Schmidt asked the EDC members to review the text and alert him to any errors in content. Mr. Schmidt asked Ms. Silveira to review the section on the new Business Association. Ms. Gill noted that she had contacted the original site designer and was waiting to hear back regarding reorganizing the site. Ms. Gill and Mr. Schmidt agreed to meet again to discuss the website. Ms. Gill suggested that the EDC should consider hiring a website manager to manage the EDC's text and photographs.

Item #4 Web-site adding commercial real estate offering on the web

Discussion ensued regarding commercial real estate listing resources. Ms. Gill stated that she had reviewed the Fall River Office of Economic Development's site, which offers basic information regarding commercial real estate opportunities. Mr. T. Humphrey suggested that instead of actually hosting the information, the EDC could look into linking through to a website that hosts the information. Mr. Schmidt stated that, as a former realtor who dealt with commercial real estate, there was no central point of listings for commercial real estate. Several websites such as cityfeet.com and loopnet.com were discussed. The EDC agreed to perform more research on the topic.

Item #5 Commercial Form Based Code

Ms. Michaud stated that the Commercial Form Based Code project, which had been ongoing since 2012, was ready to proceed to public hearing at the Town Council. She noted that Mr. Schmidt was a member of the steering committee for the project. Ms. Michaud asked the EDC if they would consider issuing a letter of support for the Zoning Amendments proposed. She added that she would circulate a summary of the project. Mr. Schmidt stated that he would draft a letter for EDC review at the May meeting.

Item #6 Seminar “Conducting Effective Land Use Reviews”

This item was taken out of order, after discussion of item #7.

Ms. Michaud stated that a Grow Smart RI training had been scheduled for May 28 at Tiverton Town Hall. There would be no cost for Tiverton officials. She agreed to circulate the flyer and registration form.

Item #7 Tiverton Business Association – update / Kristin Silveira

Ms. Silveira stated that the new Board of Directors for the group had recently met, and had decided on the name “Tiverton Business Collaborative”. She stated that a mission statement and by-laws were in process, and that the group would meet again in two weeks. After completing the mission statement and by-laws, the group would file as a non-profit and seek members from the business community. The group would also appear before the Town Council to update on progress.

Item #8 Town Planner

Mr. S. Humphrey had placed this item on the agenda and was not present to discuss. Discussion ensued regarding the need for a Town Planner in order to advance current projects and undertake new projects to further the Town’s goals. It was noted that the current budget did not include funding for a full-time planner, but that the Town Council would have jurisdiction over the distribution of [some of the] budgetary funds. A public hearing on the budget was scheduled for May 1 at Tiverton High School. The budget hearing was only for information purposes, as the Financial Town Referendum docket would be set before that date. Several of the EDC member expressed strong support for the position of a full-time planner. No action was taken.

Item #9 Next Meeting Schedule, Agenda and Adjournment

It was noted that Conservation Commission Vice Chairman Patricia Hilton had requested a place on an EDC agenda to discuss the Conservation Commission’s concerns regarding water and conservation measures necessary to support economic development. A brief discussion ensued regarding water quality and the idea of water as a precious commodity.

Mr. T. Humphrey noted that work demands had affected his attendance record, and as such he would be tendering his resignation. He stated that he did not want to take up a seat when someone else might be able to contribute more regularly. The EDC members thanked him for his work and encouraged him to stay involved with the group.

The next meeting would be held on May 8, 2014. Mr. T. Humphrey made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Schmidt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Ms. Gill, Mr. Cottrell, Mr. T. Humphrey and Mr. Schmidt voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 P.M.

Submitted by: Kate Michaud Approval Date: May 8, 2014